HOW THE FOURTH WAS OBSERVED BY HILOITES

A Stirring Oration by Col. Thomas Fitch, Long Known as the Silver Tongued Orator of the Golden West.

FOLLOWING is the Fourth of July address delivered at Hilo yesterday by Colonel Thomas Fitch:

One hundred and twenty-six years ago the Continental Congress, after days of debate, reached the conclusion announced in the document to whose stately phrases we have listened today; and it was a conclusion as momentous in its consequences as any which ever influenced the destinies of mankind.

The sentences of the declaration constituted a spell whose sorcery spoke a people into freedom, a nation into life, and a continent into such mighty and beneficent development as blessed humanity and amazed a world.

The mists of time and distance are cleared away by the white light of patriotic memory that is shining upon our faces today, and we behold, gathered around the cradle of our Republic, the patriots of 1776—John Adams, the Boston lawyer, patient and determined; Samuel Adams, the Boston merchant, enthusiastic, passionate and uncompromising; Benjamin Franklin, philanthropist, humanitarian and patriot; the Virginia Lees, descendants of plumed cavaliers; Sherman and Trumbull, descended from Cromwell's Ironsides; Philip Livingston, descended from the grim Dutchmen who opened the dykes and gave their land to the ocean rather than surrender their liberties; Robert Morris, who tossed his wealth into the vortex of the Revolution as lightly as a lover bestows upon his mistress the hard won favors of the tourney. And chief among the chieftains of that mighty band—outlined against the sky of history—the imposing figure of Thomas Jefferson.

Jefferson was alike by impulse and by habit of thought a hater of kings, and his spirit was eagle-winged in its searchings for the uppermost ether of liberty. The Declaration of Independence, which he penned, is a knitted chain of logic and a persuasive and passionate appeal. Even at this day its sentences stir the blood like the blare of trumpets. It proves the government of George the Third to have been the most unconscionable of tyrannies. It states the case of the colonists with the force of a demonstration in mathematics, and with the poetic beauty of a song of David. It is Mirabeau's ideal definition of eloquence—"reason permeated and made hot with passion." It is at once the protocol and the epic of the revolution. Its diction is as faultless as its spirit is high. It is the most powerful and the most eloquent state document in the archives of history.

When the audacious freedom-seeking, humanity-loving Thomas Jefferson said "that all men are created equal," he gathered the advanced thought of the century into a sentence which, heated with the passion of the revolution, he hurled into the faces of kings; and he made a contract with Almighty God that freedom and justice should henceforth go hand in hand in America.

All great movements of history have been the offspring of singleness of purpose. All great reforms have been accomplished by enthusiasts who refused to accept compromise, or submit to abatement of their demands. It was fortunate indeed for their descendants, it was fortunate for the world, that the controlling spirits of the revolution of 1776 were men whose clear visions pierced the mists of uncertainty, whose brave hearts defied the apparent odds against them, and whose wise and burning words uplifted the purposes and aroused the enthusiasm of a race.

It was Jefferson's mission to inaugurate a revolution, to inspire a people, to uphold the equality of manhood, to agitate for reforms, and to aid in securing the results of victory in the field; but not to guide or promote the movements of armies. He left the conflicts of war to those gifted with military genius, while he assumed the duty of imparting an anti-monarchial direction to the new government which he foresaw must issue from the war.

Thomas Jefferson, the political philosopher; George Washington, the soldier, and John Adams, the statesman and diplomat, constitute the illustrious triumvirate of American revolutionary history, and without the work of each the others might not have succeeded in creating, establishing and guiding the new nation. * * *

The military services of George Washington were pronounced by Frederick the Great to be "the most brilliant achievements recorded in military annals," and that monarch sent Washington his royal portrait, accompanied with the inscription: "From the oldest General in Europe to the Greatest General in the World."

If the true test of generalship consists in the results achieved in proportion to the forces employed, then the greatness of Washington's New Jersey campaign was not dwarfed even by the Titanic battles of our civil war. Today of all the days in the year it is our privilege and our joy to forget the later contests of brethren engaged in domestic strife and to recall with pride how the "old fox," as Lord Howe designated him, turned upon the enemy, wrested victory from the jaws of defeat, and with his ragged, hungry and half armed continentals sent the trained veterans of Europe flying in disaster from every field between the Hudson and the Schuylkill. * * *

Yet even the courage and the strategical genius of Washington might not have availed to establish the revolutionary cause had it not been for the spirit of sacrifice and the steadfastness of purpose which possessed the American people. British gold was as powerless as British steel to control the fathers, and Arnold was the only traitor. There was a public spirit that made impossible the successful and unpunished betrayal of a public trust. Colonel Mazuma was not then born. If there had been one member of the Congress of 1776 justly suspected of having received money to vote for the interests of Great Britain, he would have been promptly thrown out of a window at Independence Hall, and he would never have reached the ground, for his fall would have been stopped by a rope. The Declaration of Independence was possible, the success of the revolution was possible, the formation of a republican government was possible, because there existed a pure public spirit, a spirit of patriotism which impelled every man to guard the general rights jealously, and to resent any invasion of those rights promptly. It would probably have been cheaper to pay the stamp tax than to go to war about it. It would doubtless have been more comfortable to drink the tea than to steep the waters of Boston Bay with it; but our fathers believed in making personal sacrifices for the public good, and because they so believed and lived their belief, the United States of America was placed upon the map of the world. Our fathers interested themselves in public affairs from patriotic and not from personal motives. Treachery was rare, and unpunished treachery was impossible. Not ambition, not love of gain nor love of power, but patriotism inspired those who fought with clubbed muskets at Bunker Hill, who crimsoned the snows of Valley Forge with their shoeless feet, who followed the gleam of Mad Anthony's sword up against the streaming fire of Stony Point, who cheerfully suffered hunger and cold and wounds, and who shouted the songs of liberty as they went down to the red death of battle in order that this republic might live—live as a beacon of hope to the world, live as a heritage of liberty to mankind. * * *

The contest for independence did not terminate with the surrender of Cornwallis and the negotiation of a treaty of peace. The new nation which the pen of Jefferson had formulated and the sword of Washington had established might have been speedily tangled and strangled to death in the meshes of European diplomacy had it not been for the foresight and adroitness of John Adams, who, after peace was declared, first secured from the Dutch government a favorable treaty, and a loan of two million dollars, and then hurried to Paris, where, in connection with John Jay, he overruled Franklin, baffled the intrigues and treachery of Vergennes, the French minister, courageously disregarded the unwise and pusillanimous instructions of the American Congress, circumvented the "surly and irreconcilable" George the Third, and negotiated a treaty with England which secured us the Mississippi valley and a share of the American fisheries, not as a privilege, but as a right. It was well said by a distinguished author "On the part of the Americans the treaty of 1783 deserves to be ranked as one of the most brilliant triumphs of modern diplomacy." * * *

To tell the story of our wars, our achievements in letters, arts and arms, our moral and material growth between 1776 and 1902, is the task of a historian rather than of the speaker of an hour. No romance in all literature is half so marvellous as our history. United States! Do we ever pause to reflect what a history of achievement in all fields of effort is comprised in that little compound word?

A link of human brotherhoood 80,000,000 times muitiplied. A splinter from an old-world yoke grown and fashioned into navies and cities. A wilderness of fishing pools and forests changed by the wand of free labor into a land of factories and farms. States whose authors, and artists, and soldiers, and statesmen, and inventors, and mechanicians, and philanthropists, have made the nineteenth century blaze with the splendor of the gems which they have set like stars in the diadem of the ages. A land where education is free, where labor is protected, where manhood is respected, where no slave's presence dishonors toil, and where no freeman's utterances are choked by the hand of power. A country where there is no bar of birth or creed between the law student and the Supreme Bench, and no gold stick in waiting between the citizen and the Chief Magistrate.

In early life two of our Presidents were farm hands, two were school teachers, one was a canal boatman, one was a rail-splitter, and one was a tailor, who was taught by his wife how to read and write. Here every citizen has the right to be the equal of any other citizen—if he can. Here every man may hitch his wagon to a star, and none will say him nay.

Freedom unfetters the energies, uplifts the souls, and illumines the brains of her votaries. Despotisms produce Caesars and Napoleons, not Fultons and McCormicks and Howes. All Europe never developed a Mackay, who single handed assumes the task of girding the world. All the kings of all the centuries from Charlemagne to the last Hohenzollern never furnished an Edison—he was God's gift to the Republic alone, and not under any sun or on any shore but ours have there been Stanfords toiling and planning for a lifetime to give help to generations unborn.

Since that July morning 126 years ago, when the Bell of Independence Hall rang the natal song of American freedom, we have extended our domain southward to the Southern Cross, westward to within sight of the shores of Asia, and northward to where the sullen sun hangs for an hour on the verge of the polar night, and the scarlet fire of the aurora lights the flag of 45 States as it is saluted by the booming artillery of the Ice King.

In transportation we have progressed from the stage coach to the Pullman express, and for wagons carrying two tons we have substituted freight cars carrying thirty-two tons at the same price, and if "roads are the measure of a people's civilization," we are the most highly civilized power in the world.

In agriculture we have passed from the single furrow to the gang plow, and from the hickory flail to the combined harvester.

In internal commerce we have distanced every nation and in foreign commerce we have passed all nations except England, and with her we race neck and neck.

Our capitalists and inventors and skilled workmen have placed our country at the head of the industrial world. A girl at a power loom makes more yards of cloth in a day than both her grandmothers could have woven in a year. Science has fettered the waterfalls and telegraphed their power to cities; and houses are lit and street cars are propelled, and furnaces are heated with it.

Every day some new worker with fingers of steel and lungs of steam, or with life fed by the cataract, is placed in the factory, and the machine never sleeps and never shirks, and never grows sick or weary, and never takes a day off in order to consult with the walking delegate. In Europe 45,000,000 operatives produce 17 thousand million dollars' worth of manufactured articles per annum, or $280 worth each. In our country six million workmen produce ten thousand million dollars' worth of good per annum, or $1666 worth each. Europe sends to us for food and raw material and is beginning to draw upon us for fuel. Our people supply themselves with these essentials from their own fields and forests and mines, and even as we surpass Europe in natural advantages and natural forces, so do we excel her in labor-saving inventions, and in the skill and deftness of our workmen. We send redwood lumber to Australia. We send fir timbers to Africa. We send steel goods to Sheffield, and cotton goods to Manchester. Our locomotives are dashing through the passes of the Alaskan mountains, and filling their boilers with water from the Yukon. They are coursing along the plains of Manchuria and the steppes of Siberia. They are climbing to the clouds up both slopes of the Andes. They are acclimated in Africa, from the Cape of Good Hope to the Congo, and we can paraphrase the language of the first Napoleon and say to them as they sound their shrill notes of peaceful triumph in the very face of the Sphinx: "American locomotives! from the heights of yonder pyramids forty-one centuries look down upon you!"

Our credit reigns at the head of the world's finances; our flag is everywhere respected on land and sea; our armies would come at a drum tap out of the hives of industry to swarm in defence of their country on every shore; ours is the greatest, freest and most prosperous nation under the light of the sun. * * *

And all this we owe largely to the brave, bright, earnest, thoughtful men who framed the great chart of republican liberty 126 years ago. From the principles of that chart there has never since been a departure save in behalf of larger liberty. Capitalists and laborers have alike understoood that this government is not a Probate Court to act as a spendthrift guardian for weaklings, but a republic where the race must be to the swift, and the battle to the strong. It is a government where equality of opportunity will always be guaranteed, but where equality of result will never be enforced.

The adversity of the civil war tried us sorely. We are now passing through the trials of prosperity, and who shall doubt that we will come unscathed through the fire? Wealth may control the making of laws, but it dare not attempt to become a tyrant to the individual. The millionaire may buy Senators and Judges, but he cannot oust the pauper from his place in line at the postoffice or the barber shop, or force any man to take off his hat, nor deprive the driver of a mule cart of his right of way. The combined capital of Wall street could not force an hour's work out of a tramp who prefers to lie upon the grass.

Our government says to the worker: "The land is yours, free to cultivate; the waters are yours, free to appropriate; the forests are yours, free to hew; the mines are yours, free to locate—and yours is the right to work or remain idle as you choose."

No capitalist shall invade your rights, neither shall you invade his. Nobody shall crucify you upon a cross of gold, neither shall you hang anybody upon a gallows of silver. You shall not tear up the rails and obstruct the car of progress. You shall not smite and destroy with the hammers of anarchy the inventions with which bright brains and deft fingers are exempting mankind from the weariness of toil. Rockefeller does not take one hour's toil from you unless he pays you for it, and you shall not take one dollar from Rockefeller's one hundred millions unless you can earn it or he gives it to you. Let Vanderbilt accumulate so long as he can do so lawfully. There will be "no pockets in his shroud." He cannot take a dollar with him when he goes.

"And all he can hold in his dead, cold hand
Will be what he has given away."

We live in an age of light. We live in an advancing generation, and the retrogressive, whining, wealth-hating, labor-shirking doctrines of foreign agitators are out of joint with the times and out of place in this land. Everywhere the world is advancing. Everywhere invention, discovery and science are pushing their mighty march up the mountains, along the valleys, and into the caverns of the earth. They are riding in great ships over the foam-crested seas. They are preparing to climb to the very stars. Shall we alone "fear our fate so much" or "deem our deserts so small" as to drop the heritage of the fathers at the feet of some assassinating anarchist, and yield to a mob that which we refused to yield to a monarch? * * *

The principles of the Declaration of Independence have not so much to fear, the constitution and the laws have not so much to fear, the structure of civil society has not so much to fear from the millionaires of America as from the banded brotherhoods of beer and brawling, who beat the air with curses of millionaires. Neither in their origin nor in their use are the vast fortunes of America really offensive. The great wealth of the ancients was the result of plunder, not production. The laws punished a Roman citizen who became a trader, and condemned to death a Senator who established a manufactory. In these days we make Senators out of manufacturers. So late as the seventh century all wealth was in landed estates, and savings banks were unknown. Caste ruled the world, and it continued to rule it even in this republic until slavery went down in the stormy shock of battle.

I have no sympathy with the political catch penny phrases of those who assert that "we have drifted away from the doctrines of the Declaration of Independence and that the contest of today is between the man and the dollar."

In so far as there is any contest at all it is a contest between the man who is without a dollar, because he is too lazy, too ignorant, too dishonest to earn a dollar, and the industrious man who has saved his dollar, in which contest the dollarless man is endeavoring to get the other man's dollar away from him without giving him anything for it. It is a contest between the man with a job and the man who is afraid that he will find a job; between the bread-winner and the tramp; between the man who can write and the man who signs his name with a cross; between the depositors in the savings banks and the depositors in the faro banks; between the conscience of the country and its unintelligent selfishness. * * *

What do rich men obtain from life more than the poorest of us? Toil brings hunger, and hunger is a better sauce than is served at the clubs. God gives His beloved as sweet sleep upon a cot as upon the downiest couch. Public libraries and galleries accord the treasures of learning and art to the poorest. Music and the drama can be enjoyed as well from the galleries as from the boxes. A trolley or a cable gives a smoother and a safer ride than a carriage drawn by horses. There are no reserved seats in nature's amphitheatre. The ripple of the river, the verdure of the lawns, the shade of the trees and the perfume of the flowers belong to rich and poor alike.

I stood the other evening upon the shore at Waikiki and watched the burning sun dissolve in fret work clouds of color that filled the earth and air with glory, and then the gray lids of twilight fell upon the drowsy eyes of the sapphire sea, and the stars came out and the darkening dome of earth's temple was lit with their gleam. God gives such visions of beauty alike to capitalist and pauper, and the poorest laborer equally with the multi-millionaire, can find heaven in the prattle of his babies and the arms of the woman he loves. * * *

So long as our rivers flow to the sea, so long will the words and deeds of the patriots of 1776 find commemoration and honor on each succeeding anniversary of the nation's birth. The enduring benefits of the American revolution abide with us and across the chasm of 126 years we send to its authors the assurance of a love and gratitude that shall not fail "till the sea gives up its dead."

May we not also rejoice that in the tomb of the past the resentments and hatreds of 1776 sleep in eternal death?

In a hundred and twenty-six years the governments of England and America have so closely assimilated that the difference between them now is one of form rather than of substance. Edward the Seventh has not so much power in the British Empire as Theodore Roosevelt has in the Republic of the United States. The King has the right to veto an Act of Parliament, but such a right has not been exercised for more than a century, and an attempt to exercise it might shake the British throne. The King cannot, or at least does not, pardon a criminal or create a peer, or appoint a civil or military officer except through the proper department. A member of the House of Lords has no such potential voice in passing Acts of Parliament as has an American Senator in passing Acts of Congress, and our public men are about as eager to be called Senator, or Governor, or Judge, as is an Englishman to be designated as "Your Lordship." Our methods of legislation and our systems of jurisprudence are substantially the same, and a subject of Great Britain has practically the same rights in his country that a citizen of the United States has in his country.

Nor ought we to forget, nor shall we ever forget, the events of the last four years.

When the cloven mail of the Maine went down beneath the waters, and this nation arose in its righteous wrath against the assassin, there were mutterings and menaces throughout Continental Europe from the Black Sea to the Baltic, from the Danube to the Rhine. It was not that the old Kingdoms and Empires loved Spain more, it was that they loved the American Republic less and feared it more.

Then the red blood of kinship, sluggish for a hundred years, began to course like quicksilver through the veins of John Bull. I do not mean to say that the government of Great Britain either openly or secretly proclaimed its friendship for us. Governments speak only through official agencies, and these are always cautious, cold and non-committal. But the beating heart of England found expression in the columns of her journals, in the utterances of her orators, in the cheers which greeted tidings of American victories. It was through a hundred unofficial voices that John Bull gave warning to the nations: "I say," said he to the conspirators, "don't you think that you had better hold on a bit? France, your neutrality leaves very much to be desired; I hope that you have not quite forgotten Waterloo. Russia, you had best remember the ride to death of 600 at Balaklava. Italy, this isn't your quarrel, and I beg to remind you that your maritime cities lie under the guns of my Mediterranean fleet. Austria, why do you go out of your way to mix in this fight? Kindly bear in mind that the Danube can be ascended by my gunboats. Germany, you have everything to lose and nothing to gain by a contest. Britain desires peace, but you must not interfere against the United States. You must not aid the dying despotism of Spain. Britain, I repeat, desires peace; but I charge you all "in the name of God, take heed how you awake her sleeping sword of war."

"Uncle Sam and I have had our differences, it is true, ever since he left my bed and board and set up housekeeping for himself. In 1812 I violated his flag upon the high seas, and he gave me a receipt in full at New Orleans and Lundy's Lane. He kindly returned the favor and violated my flag on the deck of the Trent in 1861, and when, in hot blood, I was writing a message of war to the Commons, Victoria laid her woman's hand upon my arm. 'Not now, John,' said she, 'not while America is in the travail of her new birth of freedom shall British guns be loaded to help slavery.'

"Uncle Sam protested against my Venezuelan surveying party a few years ago, and I growled. But I couldn't afford to fight him for half a dozen Venezuelas' you see, so I packed up my theodolites and tore up my maps and recognized the Monroe doctrine and agreed to arbitrate.

"America and England have not always been as friendly as close relations ought to be, and I dare say that there has been provocation on both sides. In the great civil war I was a good deal nasty. I closed Exeter Hall and stopped sympathizing with the poor black slaves, and ships built with English money, and manned by English sailors, drove American commerce from the Atlantic, and lit the Arctic ocean with the flames of American whalers. But the Yankee ship Kearsarge forced the Alabama to fight and dotted the British Channel with her fragments. And after that, don't you know, I paid a small bill of fifteen millions of dollars for my conduct. Uncle Sam has not been in turn altogether fair with me. In my contest in South Africa he sympathized with the Boers. In my contest in North Africa he sympathized with El Mahdi, and whenever I have troubles in Ireland he always sympathizes with El Paddy.

"Sometimes his orators and newspapers have twisted the tail of my lion until the poor old beast roared his disgust, and sometimes my writers have picked at the pin feathers of his eagle until the enraged bird was ready to claw the letter "H" out of the alphabet.

"But these differences are at last trifling. Americans own equally with Englishmen the glories of Cressy and Agincourt, of Naseby and Marston Moor. The orators who have made the arches of Westminster ring, the poets who have sung to the ages, the dramatists and novelists and artists of England belong to America as well, for we speak the self-same tongue,

"'That Milton wrote, that Chatham spoke,
And Burns and Shakespeare sung.'

"Again, 'business is business,' don't you know, and my money is in American mines, and cattle ranges, and railroads, and sugar stock. America feeds my mills with cotton and my operatives with wheat, and is beginning to feed my furnaces with coal. When my dinner is placed on the table and I carve the meat, bless my soul, I don't rightly know whether to have the band play 'The Roast Beef of Old England" or 'The Refrigerated Steer of Yankee Doodle,' and after all, don't you know, 'God Save the King' and 'My Country, 'Tis of Thee,' are sung to the same music. I am not quarrelsome, but really, my Continental friends, I must ask you to keep your meddlesome fingers out of this Spanish-American war. I may as well be candid with all of you and tell you that I am ready to stand at Uncle Sam's back, and really it will be better for you if you don't monkey with our combination buzz saw. For if you do, if you combine against America, then, by the God of Nations, England will combine with her, and

"'Wherever we come, we twain,
The throne of the tyrant shall reel and rock,
And his menace be void and vain,
For they are lords of a strong, young land
And we are lords of the main.'"

These re-cemented ties of Anglo-Saxon union will, I hope, never again be severed, and together the English-speaking nations will lead and rule the world. Rule it not as one nation, but as one force—rule it for progress; rule it for justice; rule it for freedom; rule it for Christian civilization.

Every patriotic Englishman should celebrate the Fourth of July with heart-felt enthusiasm, not on our account, but on his own. As Lord Dundreary remarks, the reason why a dog wags its tail is because the dog is bigger than the tail. Otherwise the tail would wag the dog. The most populous town usually captures the county seat sooner or later. If we had never achieved our independence, if this country had remained a part of the British Empire, we would by this time have moved the Parliament Houses to this side of the Atlantic; the steamship lines would have lost the patronage of sea-sick American heiresses seeking titled husbands, for there would have been a choice line of Boston Dukes and Buffalo Earls sufficient to supply the local matrimonial market, and the coronation of Edward the Seventh might have taken place at Chicago.

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In the grand future of our country these islands will have a share. The steamship lines between the Orient and the Antipodes and the mainland, which now touch at our wharves, will, when the Nicaragua canal shall be constructed, be reinforced by white winged fleets. The commerce of the vast elliptic of the seas which surge from the Arctic to the Antarctic, and which wash the eastern and western shores of a hemisphere will pay tribute to us, and, with the development of our own potential resources, will make our cities as opulent as they now are beautiful.

Let us adjust our thoughts and our efforts to this grand destiny. Let us go forward with it, help it to advance and not retard it by nursing unwise and unjust and unnecessary prejudices and animosities, engendered by events that are past and gone.

There is no State or Territory of the Union so free as is Hawaii from face and caste distinctions. Let us not foster policies and passions that tend to create such. Let us not establish a policy of dissatisfaction with American institutions or of alienation from the American flag.

It is Hawaii's flag now, and no man need be ashamed to claim it and honor it. * * *

It is the flag of a people who will not be terrified by the noise of the political Anarch of the day who thinks that he is roaring and shaking his mane where he is only braying and showing his ears. The duty that confronts us we will not shirk. The destiny that awaits us we will not avoid. We have marched on and on in the vanguard of progress and freedom for all these years, and not now will we skulk to the rear. Wherever our soldiers and sailors have planted the flag in faith and honor, there it shall stay.

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